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Agenda item 3

DRAFT REPORT

Addendum

Rapporteur: Mrs. Sharon BRENNEN-HAYLOCK (Bahamas)

PROGRAMME QUESTIONS: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1998-1999 (item 2 (a))

Section 27E. Conference services

1. At its 30th meeting, on 13 October 1997, the Committee considered section 27E, Conference services, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999. The section was introduced by the Director of Conference Services, who stated that the section would also be reviewed by the Committee on Conferences in accordance with its mandate.

Discussion

2. Many delegations reaffirmed the importance of General Assembly resolution 50/11 of 2 November 1995 on multilingualism and expressed their concern that the reductions in language staff would have a negative impact on services. Some delegations pointed to the protracted delays in the issuance of summary records in most of the official languages and the adverse impact on the quality of translations, which could be a result of the increased use of temporary staff and the failure to respect standards for self-revision.

3. A number of delegations welcomed the technological innovations being proposed. One delegation called for a comprehensive strategy for New York, Geneva and Vienna, particularly in respect of the introduction of machine-assisted translation. Another delegation pointed out that not all Governments

were in a position to access materials through computerized technologies and stressed the importance of printed materials.

4. Another delegation expressed support for net budgeting and indicated that the introduction of net budgeting would allow the United Nations Office at Vienna to meet unexpected increases in demand for conference services on the part of other organizations in Vienna without adversely affecting the work programme of the United Nations.

Conclusions and recommendations

5. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of section 27E, Conference services, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999 as contained in document A/52/6/Rev.1.